



January 10, 2023

Preferred Secondary Schedule Engagement Summary Report

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Background and Introduction

During the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, the Vancouver School District (District) adjusted and adapted to a semester model from a linear secondary school schedule. The District adopted a semester model to allow for greater flexibility should a change to the schedule be required at any point in the school year due to the pandemic. The semester model reduced the number of courses students took at one time as well as the number of courses teachers had to prepare for.

The semester schedule was adopted by the District to better meet the needs of students, providing them with fewer courses to focus on at one time and more flexibility within their educational programming. The semester model met the required instructional hours under the *School Act*. It is also the model used by many neighbouring metro Vancouver school districts, both prior to and during the pandemic.

VSB secondary students currently take four courses from September to January and another four courses from February to June. Prior to this, the District's secondary schools were on a linear system where students took up to eight classes throughout the course of one school year.

When the shift to semesters was implemented, the District made a commitment to re-engage with students, staff and families about their preferred schedule. With the return to in-person instruction and with nearly two years on the semester system, the District sought to collect focused feedback from students, staff and families about a preferred secondary model.

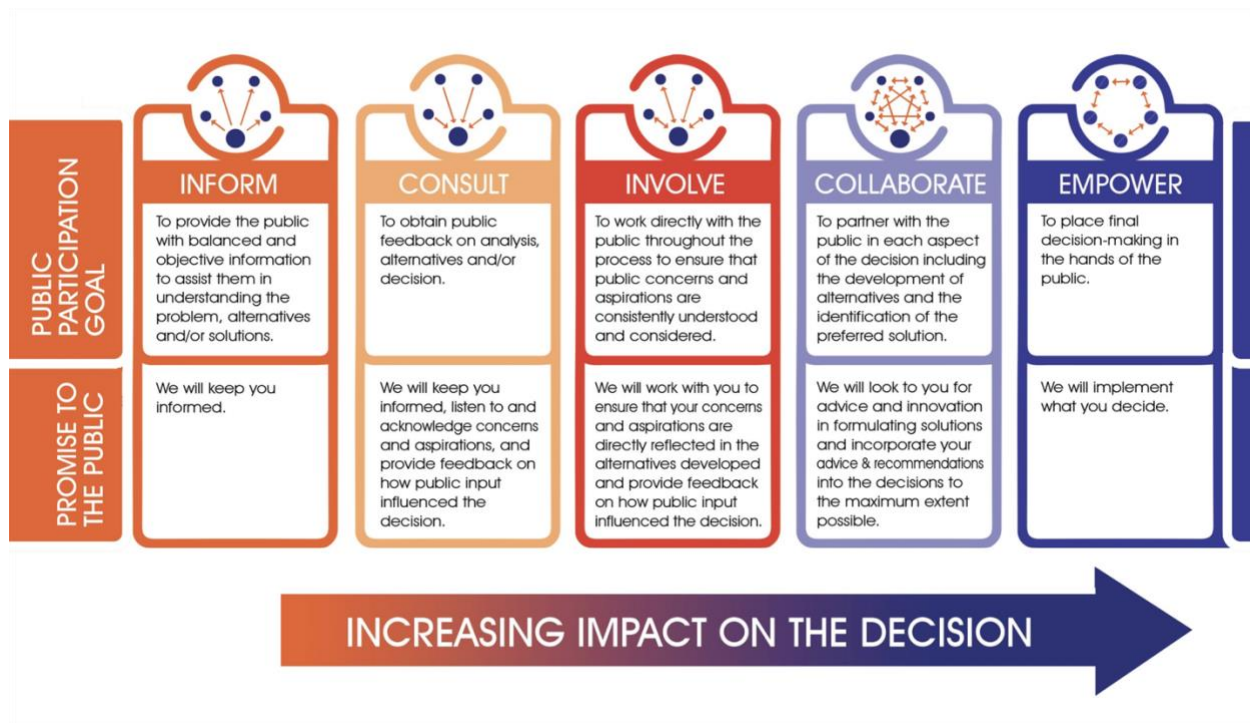
Public Engagement Overview

The District conducted a public engagement process to collect feedback about the preferred secondary schedule that prioritized student achievement and wellbeing. Feedback was gathered from students, families and staff.

In alignment with the [Education Plan](#), it was important that student voices were centred in this engagement. The District also conducted in-person and virtual student discussion groups to collect qualitative feedback from students. Of particular importance was to gauge whether students felt that they were part of school communities where they could learn, feel supported and connected so they could develop a lifelong love of learning.

Approach:

The engagement was proactive, intentional and clearly explained to students, families and staff why the District was asking for feedback and how their feedback would be used. Key to this is reporting back to audiences about how their input influenced the decision. The District's [Administrative Procedure 106: District Public Engagement](#) guides all engagement activities. Based on the above objectives, this engagement falls into the **Involve** level of the IAP2 (International Association of Public Participation) Spectrum.



Engagement Activities

Pre-engagement with staff

Pre-engagement was done with a secondary schedule working group (comprised of five teachers, five school administrators and three District staff) to obtain input about the semester system as well as to brainstorm engagement opportunities and survey questions. Many educators contributed to questions that were used in three surveys, specifically seeking feedback from students, their families and staff.

Student discussion groups

An online student discussion group was held with students from grades eight to 12 and included those who identify as being from Black, Indigenous, persons of colour, new English language learner, diverse abilities or other equity deserving communities. This discussion group provided qualitative feedback as well as information from students about what was and was not working for them. The session was facilitated using Slido. Two other in-person student discussion groups were also conducted with students at King George Secondary and Windermere Secondary.

Surveys

Targeted surveys were created for students, student families/caregivers and staff. Surveys were designed to capture the learning model that would best support student learning/achievement and wellbeing. The District sought feedback from three key audience groups:

1. Students (grades 8-12)
2. Families and caregivers (families of students from grades 4-12)

3. Staff

Each survey contained the same two open-ended questions.

1. *Is there anything you would like us to know about your experience with the semester model?*
2. *Is there anything you would like us to know about organizing secondary school schedules?*

Summary of Engagement Findings

The main objective of our engagement was to find out the preferred schedule of students, their families and staff. While most students and their families preferred the semester model, staff expressed a preference for a linear model. Along with identifying the preferred secondary schedule for all groups, our engagement also sought qualitative information about the reasons for their choices as well as the overall organization of secondary schedules.

A key finding of this process was that the majority of all groups found Flexible Instructional Time (FIT) was beneficial for student learning. Currently, FIT occurs for 50-minutes twice a week, during which students, teachers and supports are onsite. Students are encouraged to use this time to catch up on class work, collaborate with peers, or pursue learning activities that fall outside of their scheduled classes.

Via open-ended comments, participants were asked to provide feedback with their experience with the semester model. Many staff expressed a desire for an even distribution of prep time across both semesters. Some participants from all groups expressed a belief that some students learn better with the linear model and further that some courses are better delivered on a linear schedule. Participants also stated that effort should be made to balance courses so that students do not end up with one academically heavy or rigorous semester and one light semester. These insights are of importance to ensure student learning needs are best met and will help inform deliberations regarding the secondary school schedule.

Summary of Student Discussion Group Findings

Forty-three per cent of the online student discussion group was comprised of students who identified as a special education learner, person of physical or other disability, English Language Learner or member of Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ or new immigrant community. During pre-engagement with teachers across the District, concerns were raised that a semester model was disproportionately negatively impacting equity seeking groups of students. The District sought feedback directly from the group about their experiences and perceptions with respect to the semester schedule model.

Students were led through the same questions that were posed on the District-wide student survey. The students' responses were thoughtful and varied. Overall, their responses mirrored the results of the District-wide student survey.

- 29 per cent preferred linear

- 71 per cent preferred semester

The qualitative, open-ended responses from students also mirrored what was heard in the District student survey. They articulated that a semester schedule model allowed them to manage their course load better, experience less stress and allowed them to process course content more effectively.

The following statements were heard from participants:

“I find that it is hard to manage a course load of eight classes at a time. My grades have improved immensely due to the semester switch because I can hone my skills in a select amount of classes”

“I think the semester system works better because it will help most students who have trouble like me catching up with work and also reducing the amount of stress for students or reduce challenging situations students are having with work”.

“The semester system allows me to focus my energy on only 4 classes, rather than 8 classes. With only four classes to focus (on), I have more time to focus on clubs, sports, etc. I think that school is more than just academics. It is also about community and clubs are a huge component to that. To add to that, people also have lives after school. People need to work, take care of family members, have sport practice.”

Student comments around their preference for a linear model also echoed the sentiments shared in the District-wide student survey.

“In the linear system students have more time to learn course content, especially if they’re taking AP courses. It is also better for learning subjects such as math and French as it allows for the students to get regular practice in the subject. In the semester system, although it is easier to manage course load, students are more likely to forget the course content by the time they reach the next grade.”

“I prefer linear because I can balance out my learning, as linear means that I get everything. Like right now I get Physical Education, but I won’t get it next semester. This means that I don’t get to actually move around next semester”

“With the linear system you often get an extra day to do homework and it’s an even load the whole year while in semester systems the first semester could be very easy but the second a very heavy load.”

“Linear allows better bonds between students and time to find teachers. Especially with spare blocks being every other day rather than concentrated in a single semester. Semester can be overwhelming with homework due sooner.

Students in the discussion groups also supported FIT as a structure they would like to see in future schedule models.

- 91 per cent of students were in support of it continuing next year
- 2 per cent of students did not want it to continue next year
- 7 per cent of students responded Maybe/Unsure

Students stated that FIT allows them to catch up or get extra help (44 per cent), reduces their stress (33 per cent), helps them develop time management skills and personal responsibility (15 per cent) and gives them an opportunity for enrichment, such as, diving deeper into a certain topic (8 per cent). A

common theme heard is captured in the quote from a student, “Considering just how many moving parts high school has, having a time to get better organized and triage the million different things, deadlines, etc., is invaluable”.

Survey Participants

Overall, there were 6,834 responses to the student survey, 6,441 responses to the family/caregiver survey and 1,037 responses for the staff survey, totaling 14,312 responses.

Students were encouraged by school staff to complete the survey. Emails were sent to families of intermediate and secondary students throughout the District. Emails to representatives of the District’s formal stakeholder groups invited staff to participate in the survey.

Language barriers

A translation notice was included in the email sent out to all families inviting them to participate in the survey. Multicultural liaison staff from the District’s Newcomer Welcome Centre reached out to families to facilitate participation by those who required translation services.

See [Appendix A](#) for survey questions and results.

Summary of Student Survey Results

Students in grades 8-12 at all secondary school sites completed the student survey. For full breakdown of students by school and grade, please refer to [Appendix A](#).

Relationships in semester vs linear

Because students in grades 11 and 12 had previous experience with the linear system before the District transitioned to the semester system in 2020, they were asked to answer additional targeted questions regarding the linear versus semester schedule. When asked if it was easier to build relationships with peers in a semester or linear schedule 1,149 (46.18 per cent) students indicated semester, 945 (37.98 per cent) indicated linear, while 394 (15.84 per cent) had no preference.

Students in grades 11 and 12 were also asked if it was easier to build relationships with teachers in a semester or linear schedule. In response, 1,364 (54.82 per cent) students indicated semester model provided a better relationship building, 797 (32.03 per cent) selected linear, and 327 (13.14 per cent) had no preference.

Preferred schedule

The survey asked participants whether they preferred a semester or a linear schedule. Of student participants, 4344 (67.76 per cent) were in favour of the semester system versus 2067 (32.24 per cent) students who preferred the linear system.

Students who stated that they preferred the semester model were asked what the most important reason for their selection. The response, “I can manage my course load better”, was selected by 3,019

(71.27 per cent) of students. This was followed by 634 (14.97 per cent) of students who selected, “I can learn course content better”; 326 (7.70 per cent) of students that selected, “Suits my learning needs”; and 257 (6.07 per cent) of students who selected “Other”.

Students who stated that they preferred the linear model were asked what the most important reason for their selection. The response, “I can learn course content better”, was selected by 751 (37.61 per cent) of students. This was followed by 639 (32 per cent) of students who selected, “I can manage my course load better”; 309 (15.47 per cent) of students that selected, “Suits my learning needs”; and 298 (14.92 per cent) of students who selected “Other”.

Flexible Instructional Time (FIT)

Students were asked a series of questions regarding FIT. When asked, “Do you think FIT supports your success at school?”, 5,392 (90.36 per cent) students selected “Yes” and 575 (9.64 per cent) students selected “No”.

When asked if FIT should continue into future school years, 5,003 (84.61 per cent) students selected “Yes”, 307 (5.19 per cent) of students selected “No” while 603 (10.20 per cent) selected “Maybe/Unsure”.

For the full list of survey questions and responses regarding FIT, please see [Appendix A](#).

Equity deserving groups

Students were asked the following optional question: “Do you belong to an equity deserving group? (Have you faced barriers as a special education learner, person of physical or other disability, English Language Learner or member of the Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ or new immigrant communities?)”

Of 4,366 respondents, 1,186 (27.16 per cent) selected “Yes”. Of those who selected that they belong to an equity deserving group, 786 (66.27 per cent) stated that they preferred a semester schedule versus 400 (33.73 per cent) who stated that they preferred a linear schedule.

Open-ended questions

The open-ended question, “Is there anything you would like us to know about your experience with the semester model?” received 1,192 responses. The open-ended question, “Is there anything you would like us to know about organizing secondary school schedules?” received 859 responses. See [Appendix D](#) for a selection of verbatim responses.

Summary of Family/Caregiver Survey Results

Families of students at all secondary school sites completed the student survey. Families of students in grades 4-7 were also invited to participate in the survey. For the full breakdown of families by school and grade, please refer to [Appendix B](#).

Relationships in semester vs linear

When asked if it was easier for their child to build relationships with peers in a semester or linear schedule 1,910 (35.69 per cent) participants selected linear, 1,338 (25 per cent) selected semester and 2,104 (39.31 per cent) had no preference.

Families were also asked if it was easier for their child to build relationships with educators in a semester or linear schedule. In response, 2,042 (38.15 per cent) participants selected linear, 1,868 (34.9 per cent) selected semester and 1,442 (26.94 per cent) had no preference.

Preferred schedule

The survey asked participants whether they preferred a semester or a linear schedule. Of family participants, 3,232 (56.73 per cent) were in favour of the semester system versus 2,465 (43.27 per cent) family participants who preferred the linear system.

Family participants who stated that they preferred the semester model were asked the most important reason for their selection. The response, “My child can manage their course load better”, was the most selected response by 1,908 (61.02 per cent) of families. This was followed by 799 (25.55 per cent) of families who selected, “My child can learn course content better”; 242 (7.74 per cent) of families that selected, “Addresses my child’s learning needs”; and 178 (5.69 per cent) of families who selected “Other”.

Family participants who stated that they preferred the linear model were asked the most important reason for their selection. The response, “My child can learn course content better”, was selected by 1,204 (50.27 per cent) of families. This was followed by 476 (19.87 per cent) of families who selected, “Other”; 423 (17.66 per cent) participants that selected, “My child can manage their course load better”; and 292 (12.19 per cent) families who selected “Addresses my child’s learning needs”.

Flexible Instructional Time (FIT)

Families were asked a series of questions regarding FIT. When asked, “Do you think FIT supports student success at school?”, 4,017 (75.85 per cent) families selected “Yes” and 1,279 (24.15 per cent) family participants selected “No”.

When asked if FIT should continue into future school years, 3,393 (64.84 per cent) family participants selected “Yes”, 1,049 (20.05 per cent) selected “Maybe/Unsure” and 791 (15.12 per cent) families selected “No”.

For the full list of survey questions and responses regarding FIT, please see [Appendix B](#).

Equity deserving groups

Families were asked the following optional question: “Do you or your child belong to an equity deserving group? (Have you or your child faced barriers as a special education learner, person of physical or other disability, English Language Learner or member of the Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ or new immigrant communities?)”

Of 4,590 respondents, 1,257 (27.39 per cent) selected “Yes”. Of those who selected that they belong to an equity deserving group, 3,232 (56.73 per cent) stated that they preferred a semester schedule versus 2,465 (43.27 per cent) who stated that they preferred a linear schedule.

Open-ended questions

The open-ended question, “Is there anything you would like us to know about your experience with the semester model?” received 1,394 responses. The open-ended question, “Is there anything you would like us to know about organizing secondary school schedules?” received 1,044 responses. See [Appendix D](#) for a selection of verbatim responses.

Summary of Staff Survey Results

Staff at all secondary school sites were invited to complete the staff survey. For the full breakdown of staff by school, employee group and area of instruction, please refer to [Appendix C](#).

Relationships in semester vs linear

When asked if it was easier for students to build relationships with peers in a semester or linear schedule 579 (59.57 per cent) participants selected linear, 266 (27.37 per cent) had no preference and 127 (13.07 per cent) selected semester.

Staff were also asked if it was easier for students to build relationships with them in a semester or linear schedule. 577 (59.36 per cent) participants selected linear, 224 (23.05 per cent) had no preference and 171 (17.59 per cent) selected semester.

Preferred schedule

The survey asked participants whether they preferred a semester or a linear schedule. Of staff participants, 729 (73.34 per cent) were in favour of the linear system versus 265 (26.66 per cent) participants who preferred the semester system.

Staff participants who stated that they preferred the linear model were asked the most important reason for their selection. The response, “Students can learn course content better”, was selected by 239 (33.24 per cent) staff. This was followed by 223 (31.02 per cent) staff who selected, “Addresses student learning needs”; 134 (18.64 per cent) participants that selected, “Manageable workload”; and 123 (17.11 per cent) staff who selected “Other”.

Staff participants who stated that they preferred the semester model were asked the most important reason for their selection. The response, “Addresses student learning needs”, was the most selected response by 82 (30.83 per cent) staff. This was followed by 80 (30.08 per cent) staff who selected, “Students can learn course content better”; 53 (19.92 per cent) staff that selected, “Manageable workload”; and 51 (19.17 per cent) staff who selected “Other”.

Flexible Instructional Time (FIT)

Staff were asked a series of questions regarding FIT. When asked, “Do you think FIT supports student success at school?”, 611 (66.34 per cent) staff selected “Yes” and 310 (33.66 per cent) participants selected “No”.

When asked if FIT should continue into future school years, 487 (52.88 per cent) participants selected “Yes”, 242 (26.28 per cent) selected “Maybe/Unsure” and 192 (20.85 per cent) staff selected “No”.

For the full list of survey questions and responses regarding FIT, please see [Appendix C](#).

Equity deserving groups

Staff were asked the following optional question: “Do you belong to an equity deserving group? (Have you faced barriers as a special education learner, person of physical or other disability, English Language Learner or member of the Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ or new immigrant communities?)”

Of 802 respondents, 244 (30.42 per cent) selected “Yes”. Of those who selected that they belong to an equity deserving group, 175 (71.72 per cent) stated that they preferred a linear schedule versus 69 (28.28 per cent) who stated that they preferred a semester schedule.

Open-ended questions

The open-ended question, “Is there anything you would like us to know about your experience with the semester model?” received 545 responses. The open-ended question, “Is there anything you would like us to know about organizing secondary school schedules?” received 424 responses. See [Appendix D](#) for a selection of verbatim responses.

Summary of Key Themes

The following key themes emerged from the findings discussed above.

1. The desire for more evenly distributed staff prep time

Staff were vocal about the need for prep time to be scheduled more evenly in both semesters. It was noted that in the linear system, prep time was offered throughout the year (as one of the eight blocks in the eight-block rotation), whereas in the semester system, most teachers received only minimal (25 minutes every two weeks) prep time in the semester that they did not have their scheduled prep. Several teachers mentioned feeling burnt out due to inadequate prep time and the demands imposed by the condensed nature of semesters. One teacher stated, “Depending on how the teaching load is, a prep may fall into a semester that is not a challenge to teach while a teacher may have an intense semester without time to prep or mark which leads to burn-out.”

To alleviate workloads, teachers suggested that prep time be offered throughout the year, should the semester model remain the schedule of choice in the District. One staff member stated, “Would be great if prep time can be divided equally in both semesters.”

2. The desire to complete fewer courses at one time

Several students expressed satisfaction with being able to focus on fewer courses at one time. One stated, “Focusing on four subjects at a time helps me understand the material and keeps the workload balanced.” Some students cited having fewer courses as reasons for alleviating stress and contributing to their positive mental health. Some stated that the routine of having the same four courses every day helped to alleviate anxiety. They felt it was easier to manage their course load and also dive deeper into a certain topic when concentrating on fewer courses at one time instead of having attention divided with eight subjects.

Some families also noted that as that as this is the model most frequently used in post-secondary, it was good preparation for their children to have practice with this model. One family survey participant stated, "When I experienced the semester model in high school, it prepared me best for the post-secondary environment."

3. Need for a more balanced work/course load

Several staff noted the desire to see a more balanced course load for students as well as a more balanced workload for themselves. One teacher stated, "If there is more thought put into managing and keeping balance of teacher workloads (aka reducing number of teachable subjects) it is definitely an easier system to manage for staff and students."

Students also noted that more balance with regards to scheduling would be beneficial as some mentioned they can end up with one academically heavy semester and one with all electives. One student stated, "Right now, I don't really have academic subject and many homework to do. I want the courses that I take to be more balanced, and I feel like the one of semester is too free and no much work to do (in my experience) and the other semester is pretty hard and many works to do (my friend's experience)."

There were concerns raised by all groups that not delivering certain courses year-round can have an unintended negative effect on students. For example, some noted courses like Physical Education which have a positive effect on a student's physical and mental health should be offered year-round. There were also concerns raised that in academically rigorous courses students would not retain concepts that were only taught for half a school year. One student said, "As a student who experienced the linear schedule in my home country, I still prefer the semester model because I can focus more on my courses. However, there is a defect that students might forget and have difficulty remembering what they learned last year." One family-participant echoed similar sentiments, "Subjects learned in the first semester tends to be untouched and forgotten unless students have a strong discipline to keep reviewing on their own."

Some survey participants suggested a potential hybrid model for certain classes that would benefit from being offered year-round. One family-participant suggested, "Certain subjects like math, English, 2nd language, and gym need to be taught continuously. Semester might be ok for things like Science and Socials and electives."

4. Inadequacy of time

Several staff noted an inadequacy of time that does not serve some students' learning needs. Some staff mentioned feeling rushed when planning lessons. One teacher noted, "From a teacher's perspective it is difficult to "pace" one's teaching. I have had to cut many of the fun enrichment activities I used to do with my classes." Participants in all groups mentioned that some students require processing time between subjects to digest subject material, while others learn better with more concentrated instructional time.

5. Impact to relationship building

Some families mentioned that the semesters have had a positive impact on relationship building between educators and students due to the focused time with a fewer number of teachers. One parent

noted, “I feel a semester model better suits the transition from elementary to secondary by allowing more time with each teacher.” Another family member stated, “At the social level it also supports a sense of belonging and stronger relationships than if he was running around the school to get to other classes.”

Some staff noted that relationship building is negatively affected in the semester system, with one stating, “It does not allow the students and teachers to develop the long-standing relationships that allow us to connect with each other in the same way. While technically the amount of time spent together should be the same, there is a difference between getting to know someone for 5 months vs 10 months.”

Conclusion

While there was variance amongst survey responses, most students and families were in favour of keeping the semester system. As reflected in the report, many had suggestions for improving the semester model if kept or adopting a hybrid system. Most staff members were in favour of adopting the linear system, primarily stating reasons for the inadequacy of prep time in the semester system and semesters allowing more processing time that addresses student learning needs.

Next Steps

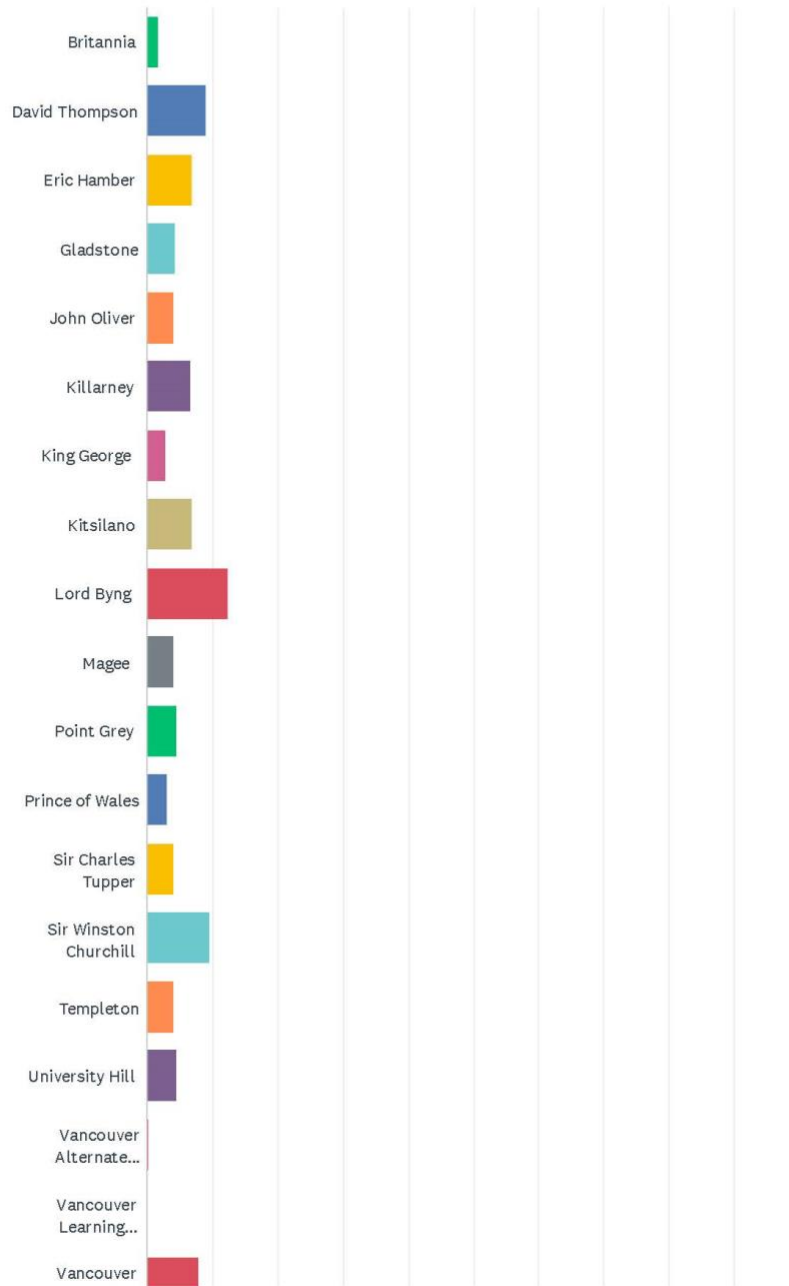
Based on the engagement report and findings along with consideration of student success outcomes, District staff will make decision that will be announced by mid-January. To keep up to date with this engagement, visit govsb.ca/secondarysurvey.

Appendix A: Student Survey and Results

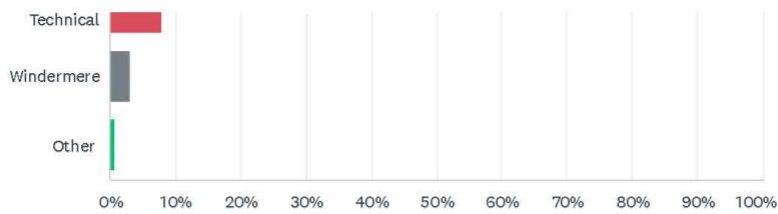
Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q1 What school do you attend?

Answered: 6,834 Skipped: 0



Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

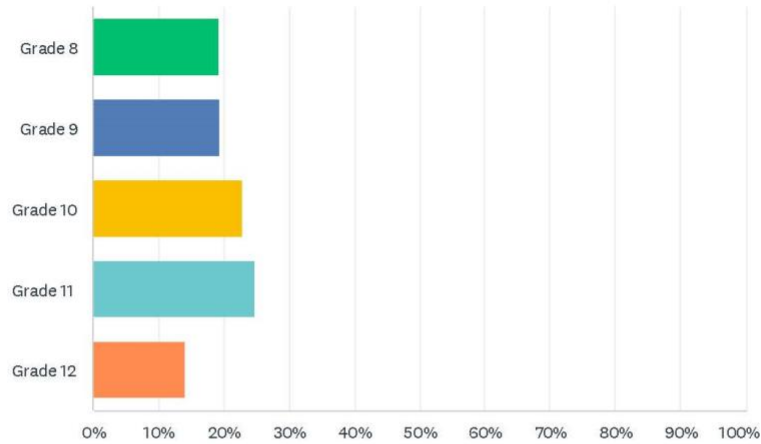


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Britannia	1.71%	117
David Thompson	9.00%	615
Eric Hamber	6.83%	467
Gladstone	4.23%	289
John Oliver	4.16%	284
Killarney	6.60%	451
King George	2.85%	195
Kitsilano	6.77%	463
Lord Byng	12.36%	845
Magee	4.14%	283
Point Grey	4.58%	313
Prince of Wales	3.09%	211
Sir Charles Tupper	3.95%	270
Sir Winston Churchill	9.50%	649
Templeton	4.10%	280
University Hill	4.39%	300
Vancouver Alternate Secondary School	0.15%	10
Vancouver Learning Network	0.06%	4
Vancouver Technical	7.86%	537
Windermere	3.07%	210
Other	0.60%	41
TOTAL		6,834

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q2 What grade are you in?

Answered: 6,834 Skipped: 0

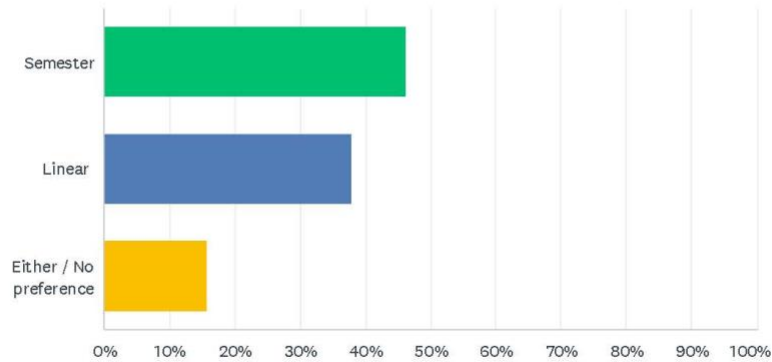


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Grade 8	19.17%	1,310
Grade 9	19.30%	1,319
Grade 10	22.74%	1,554
Grade 11	24.69%	1,687
Grade 12	14.11%	964
TOTAL		6,834

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q3 Do you think it is easier to build relationships with your peers in a semester or linear schedule?

Answered: 2,488 Skipped: 4,346

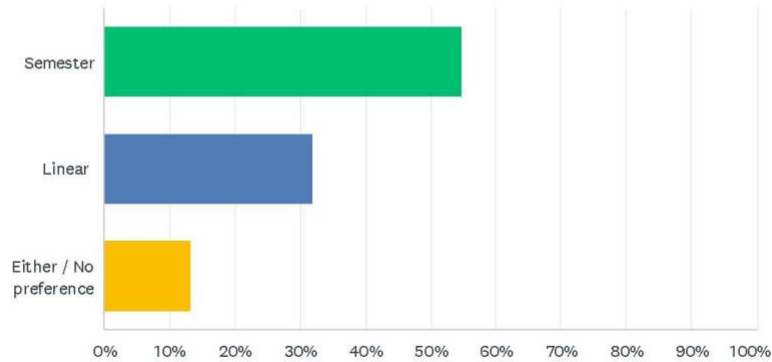


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester	46.18%	1,149
Linear	37.98%	945
Either / No preference	15.84%	394
TOTAL		2,488

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q4 Do you think it is easier to build relationships with teachers in a semester or linear schedule?

Answered: 2,488 Skipped: 4,346

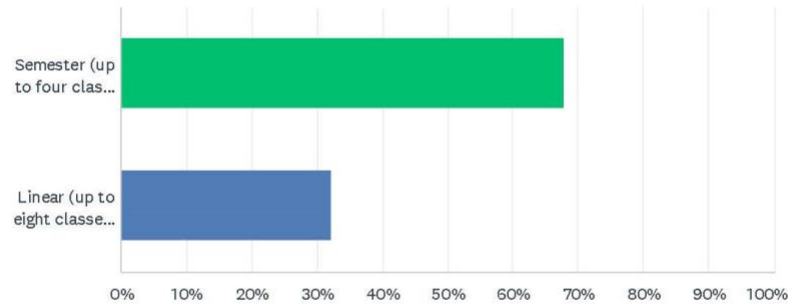


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester	54.82%	1,364
Linear	32.03%	797
Either / No preference	13.14%	327
TOTAL		2,488

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q5 Which class schedule format do you prefer, semester or linear?

Answered: 6,411 Skipped: 423

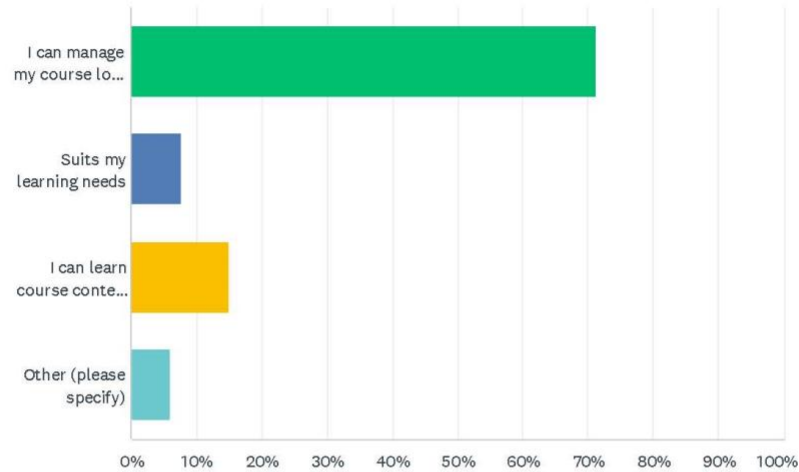


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester (up to four classes that run for one semester twice a year)	67.76%	4,344
Linear (up to eight classes that run for the full school year)	32.24%	2,067
TOTAL		6,411

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q6 If you stated that you prefer a semester model, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 4,236 Skipped: 2,598

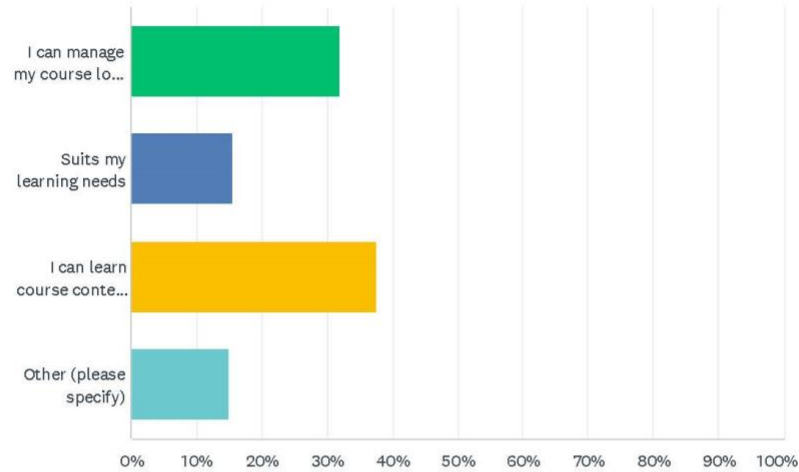


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I can manage my course load better	71.27%	3,019
Suits my learning needs	7.70%	326
I can learn course content better	14.97%	634
Other (please specify)	6.07%	257
TOTAL		4,236

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q7 If you stated that you prefer a linear model, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 1,997 Skipped: 4,837

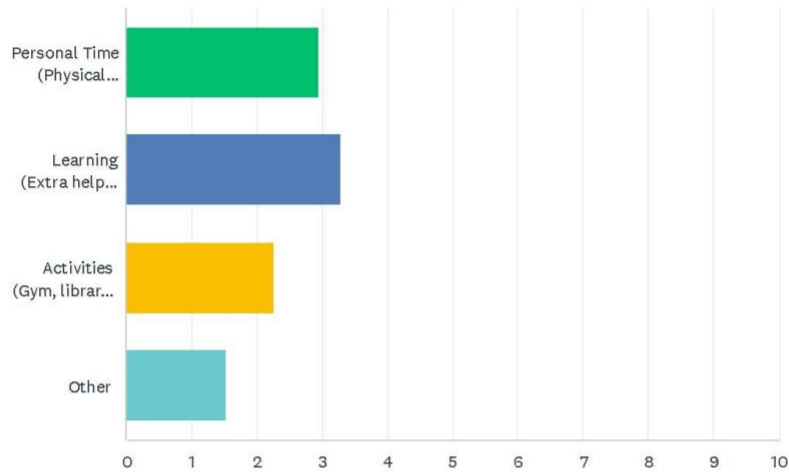


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I can manage my course load better	32.00%	639
Suits my learning needs	15.47%	309
I can learn course content better	37.61%	751
Other (please specify)	14.92%	298
TOTAL		1,997

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q8 How do you use your Flexible Instructional Time (FIT)? Rank from most frequent to least frequent. (1 most frequent, 4 least frequent or not at all.)

Answered: 5,994 Skipped: 840

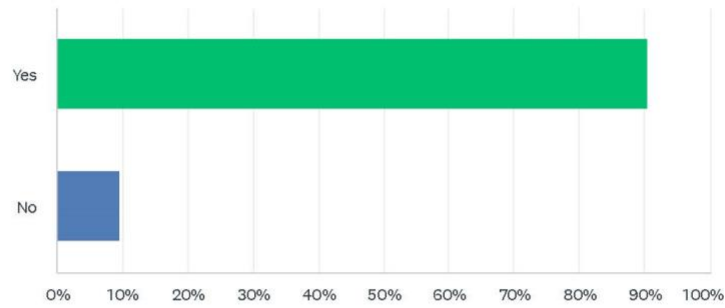


	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE
Personal Time (Physical exercise, nutrition/snack breaks, catching up with friends/social connections, etc.)	30.40% 1,822	40.26% 2,413	21.92% 1,314	7.42% 445	5,994	2.94
Learning (Extra help from teachers and peers, tutorials, make-up work, tests, class and homework, project work, study, etc.)	54.45% 3,264	26.06% 1,562	12.53% 751	6.96% 417	5,994	3.28
Activities (Gym, library, extra-curricular activities, etc.)	8.78% 526	25.74% 1,543	47.38% 2,840	18.10% 1,085	5,994	2.25
Other	6.37% 382	7.94% 476	18.17% 1,089	67.52% 4,047	5,994	1.53

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q9 Do you think FIT supports your success at school?

Answered: 5,967 Skipped: 867

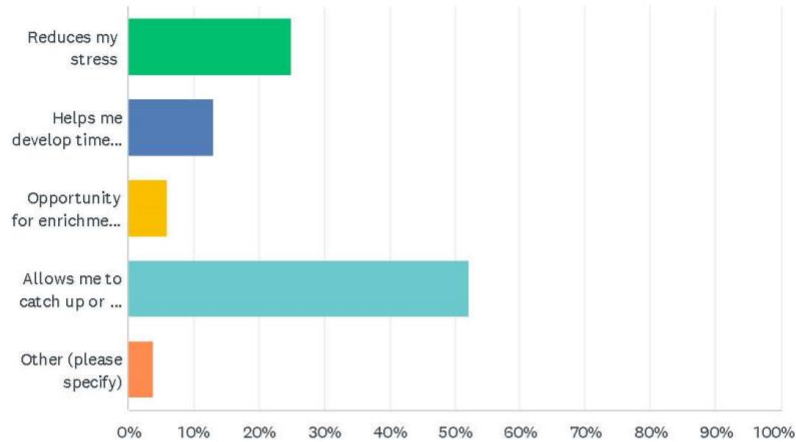


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.36%	5,392
No	9.64%	575
TOTAL		5,967

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q10 If you answered yes, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 5,367 Skipped: 1,467

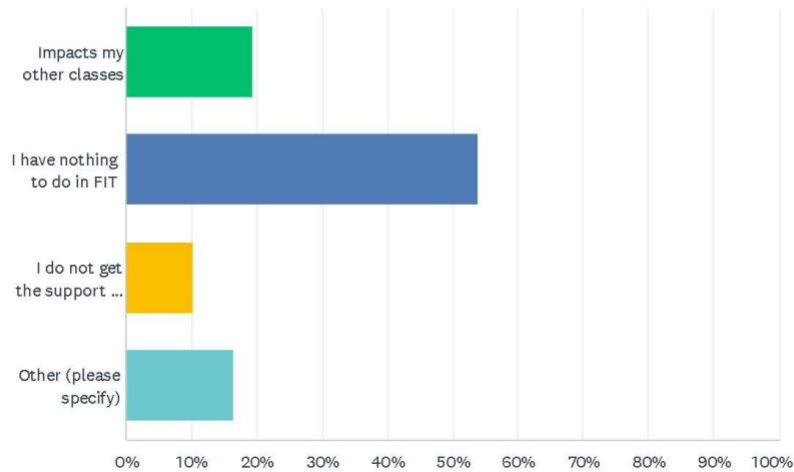


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Reduces my stress	25.02%	1,343
Helps me develop time management skills and personal responsibility	13.10%	703
Opportunity for enrichment (i.e.: diving deeper into a certain topic)	5.87%	315
Allows me to catch up or get extra help	52.25%	2,804
Other (please specify)	3.76%	202
TOTAL		5,367

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q11 If you answered no, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 580 Skipped: 6,254

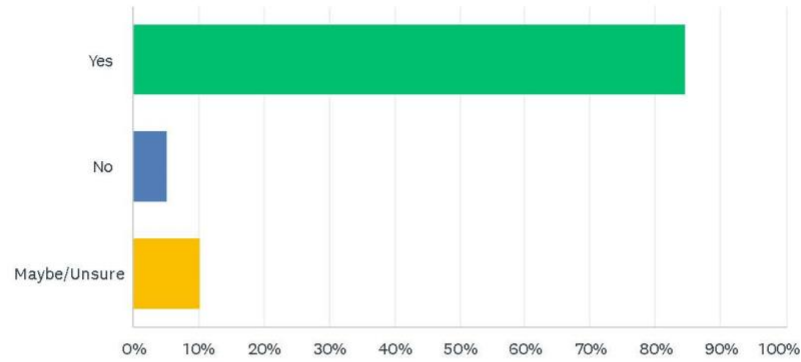


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Impacts my other classes	19.48%	113
I have nothing to do in FIT	53.97%	313
I do not get the support I need during FIT	10.17%	59
Other (please specify)	16.38%	95
TOTAL		580

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q12 Do you want FIT to continue into future school years?

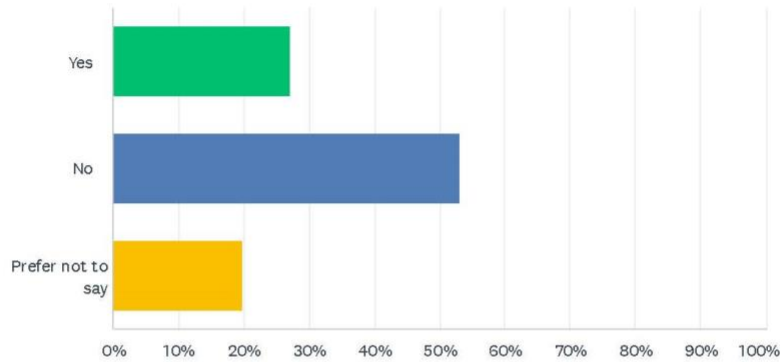
Answered: 5,913 Skipped: 921



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
Yes		84.61% 5,003
No		5.19% 307
Maybe/Unsure		10.20% 603
TOTAL		5,913

Q13 [Optional] Do you belong to an equity deserving group? (Have you faced barriers as a special education learner, person of physical or other disability, English Language Learner or member of the Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ or new immigrant communities?)

Answered: 4,366 Skipped: 2,468



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.16%	1,186
No	53.05%	2,316
Prefer not to say	19.79%	864
TOTAL		4,366

Student - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q14 [Optional] Is there anything you would like us to know about your experience with the semester model?

Answered: 1,192 Skipped: 5,642

Q15 [Optional] Is there anything you would like us to know about organizing secondary school schedules?

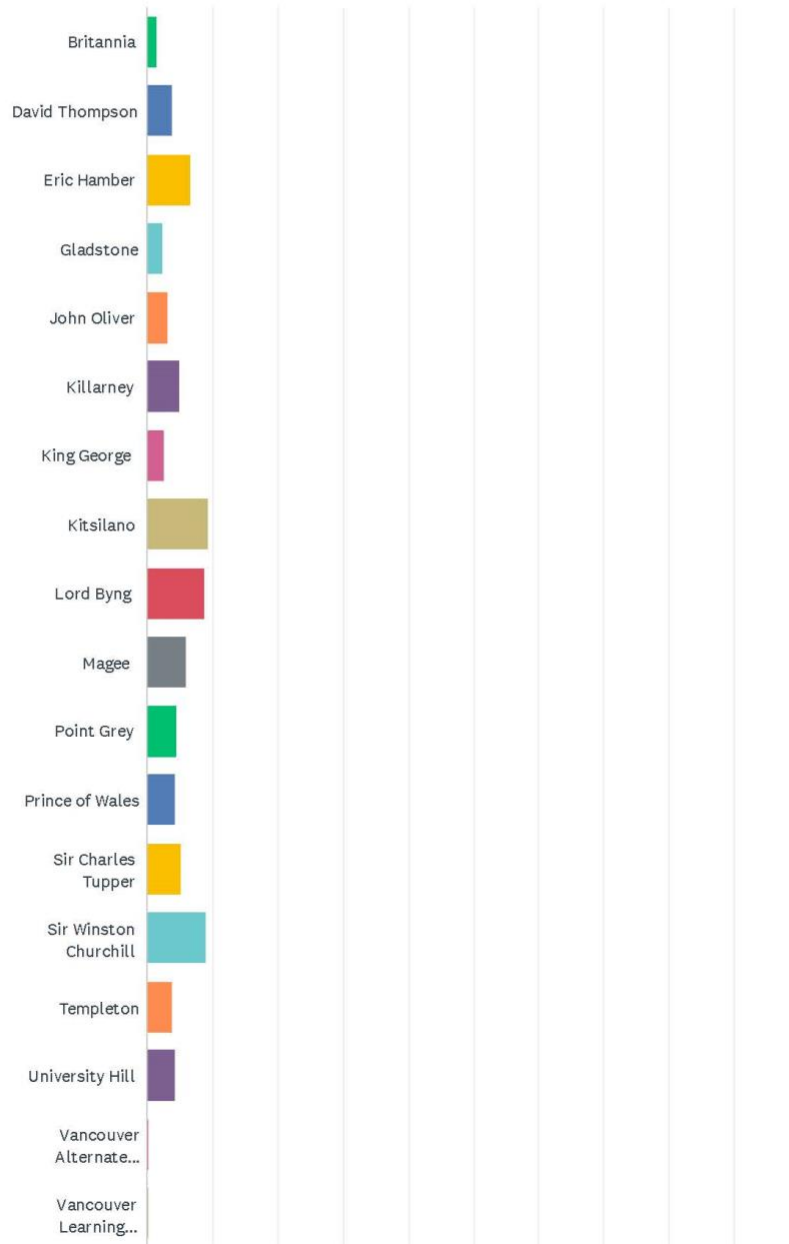
Answered: 859 Skipped: 5,975

Appendix B: Family/Caregiver Survey and Results

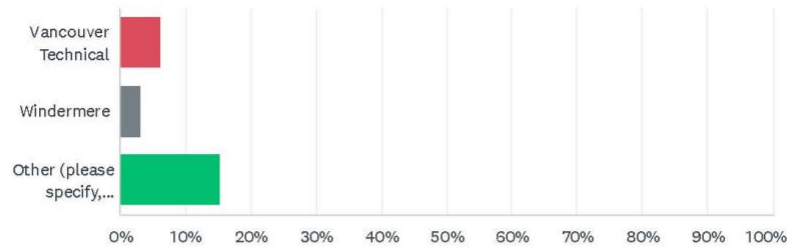
Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q1 What school does your child attend? If you have multiple children attending VSB schools, select all that apply.

Answered: 6,441 Skipped: 0



Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

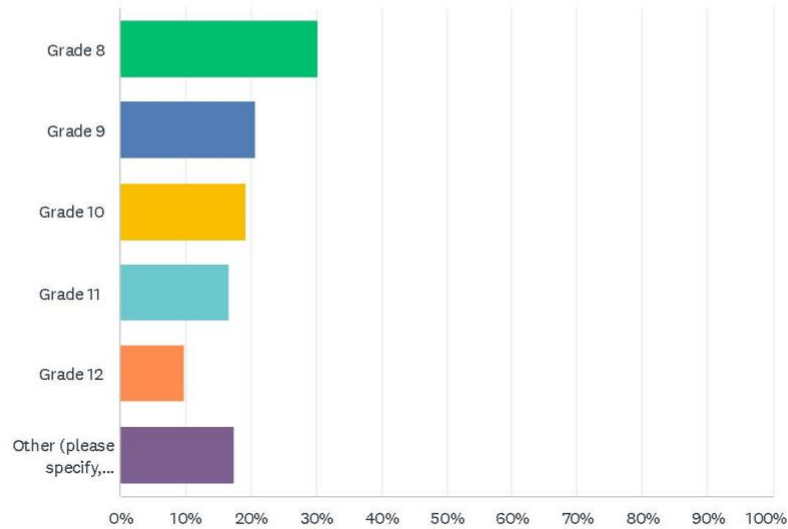


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Britannia	1.43%	92
David Thompson	3.91%	252
Eric Hamber	6.61%	426
Gladstone	2.28%	147
John Oliver	3.24%	209
Killarney	4.89%	315
King George	2.59%	167
Kitsilano	9.33%	601
Lord Byng	8.83%	569
Magee	5.96%	384
Point Grey	4.52%	291
Prince of Wales	4.16%	268
Sir Charles Tupper	5.20%	335
Sir Winston Churchill	8.96%	577
Templeton	3.80%	245
University Hill	4.27%	275
Vancouver Alternate Secondary School	0.17%	11
Vancouver Learning Network	0.26%	17
Vancouver Technical	6.21%	400
Wndermere	3.14%	202
Other (please specify, include elementary school name if applicable)	15.39%	991
Total Respondents: 6,441		

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q2 What grade is your child in? If you have multiple children attending VSB schools, select all that apply.

Answered: 6,094 Skipped: 347

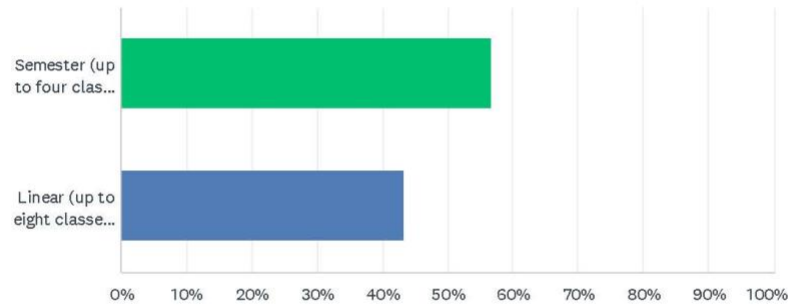


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Grade 8	30.24%	1,843
Grade 9	20.61%	1,256
Grade 10	19.12%	1,165
Grade 11	16.59%	1,011
Grade 12	9.71%	592
Other (please specify, include grade if applicable)	17.56%	1,070
Total Respondents: 6,094		

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q3 Which class schedule format do you prefer, semester or linear?

Answered: 5,696 Skipped: 745

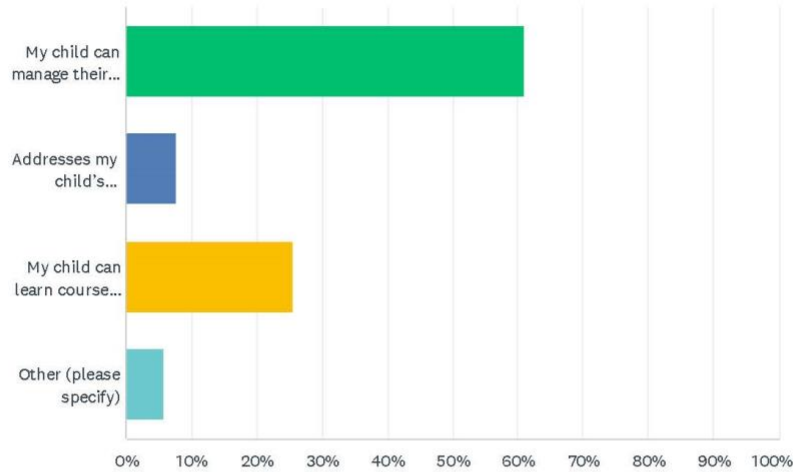


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester (up to four classes that run for one semester twice a year)	56.74%	3,232
Linear (up to eight classes that run for the full school year)	43.26%	2,464
TOTAL		5,696

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q4 If you stated that you prefer a semester model, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 3,127 Skipped: 3,314

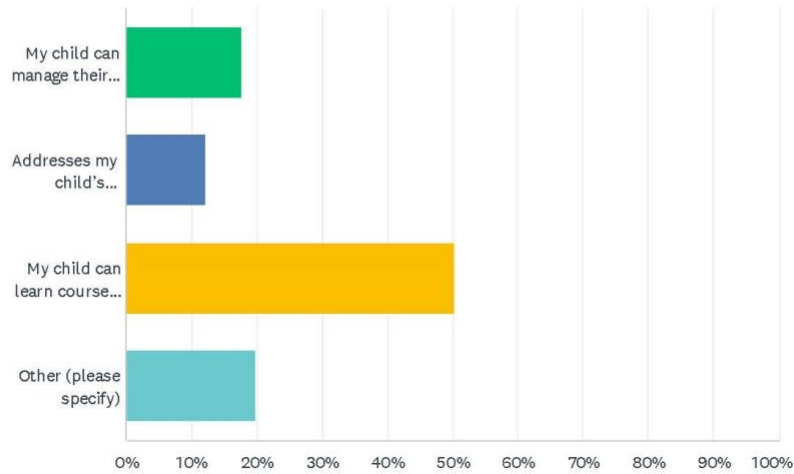


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
My child can manage their course load better	61.02%	1,908
Addresses my child's learning needs	7.74%	242
My child can learn course content better	25.55%	799
Other (please specify)	5.69%	178
TOTAL		3,127

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q5 If you stated that you prefer a linear model, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 2,395 Skipped: 4,046

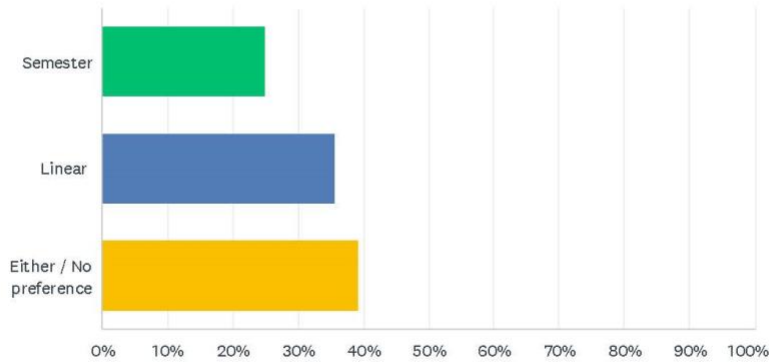


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
My child can manage their course load better	17.66%	423
Addresses my child's learning needs	12.19%	292
My child can learn course content better	50.27%	1,204
Other (please specify)	19.87%	476
TOTAL		2,395

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q6 Do you think it is easier for your child to build relationships with their peers in a semester or linear schedule?

Answered: 5,352 Skipped: 1,089

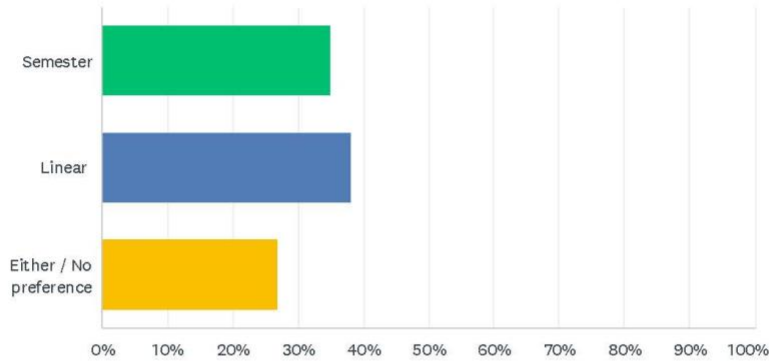


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester	25.00%	1,338
Linear	35.69%	1,910
Either / No preference	39.31%	2,104
TOTAL		5,352

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q7 Do you think it is easier for your child to build relationships with their educators in a semester or linear schedule?

Answered: 5,352 Skipped: 1,089

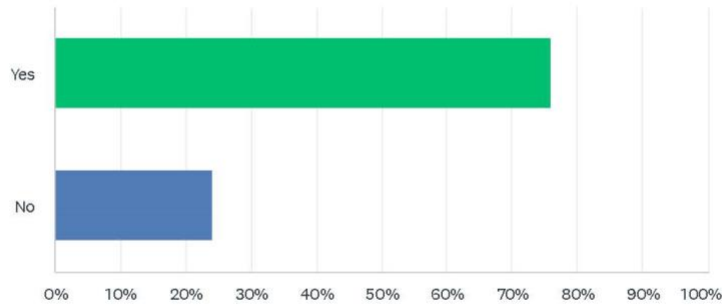


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester	34.90%	1,868
Linear	38.15%	2,042
Either / No preference	26.94%	1,442
TOTAL		5,352

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q8 Do you think FIT supports student success at school?

Answered: 5,296 Skipped: 1,145

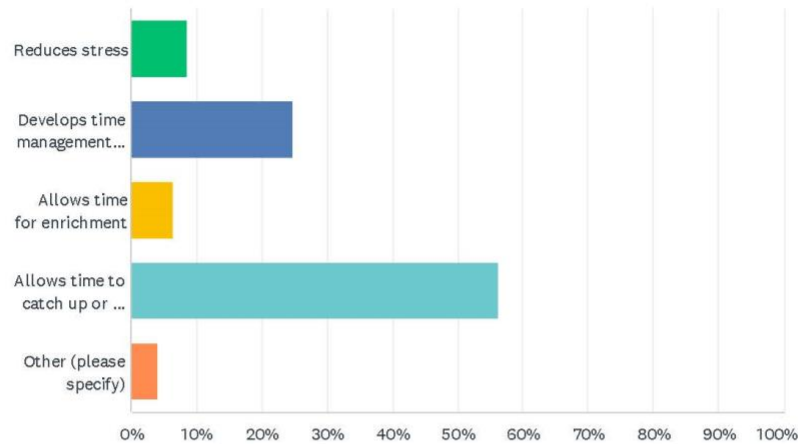


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	75.85%	4,017
No	24.15%	1,279
TOTAL		5,296

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q9 If you answered yes, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 3,983 Skipped: 2,458

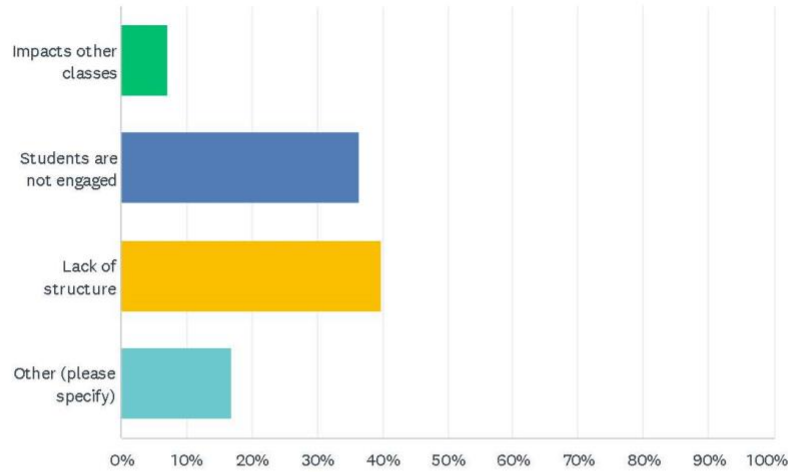


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Reduces stress	8.44%	336
Develops time management skills and personal responsibility	24.78%	987
Allows time for enrichment	6.40%	255
Allows time to catch up or get extra help	56.39%	2,246
Other (please specify)	3.99%	159
TOTAL		3,983

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q10 If you answered no, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 1,281 Skipped: 5,160

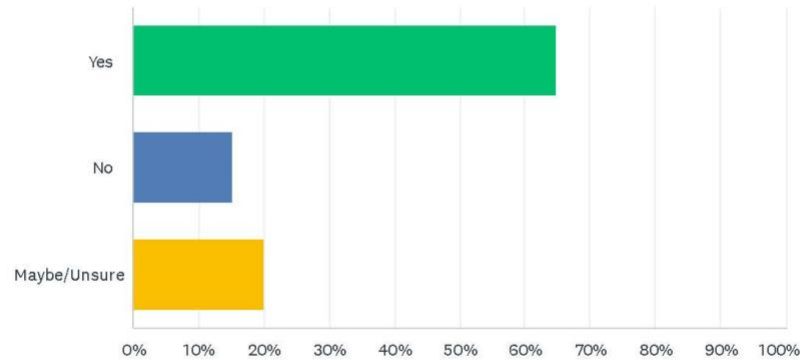


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Impacts other classes	6.95%	89
Students are not engaged	36.46%	467
Lack of structure	39.81%	510
Other (please specify)	16.78%	215
TOTAL		1,281

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q11 Do you want FIT to continue into future school years?

Answered: 5,233 Skipped: 1,208

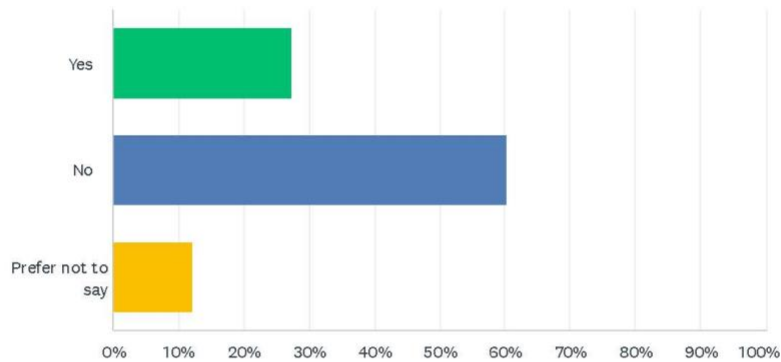


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	64.84%	3,393
No	15.12%	791
Maybe/Unsure	20.05%	1,049
TOTAL		5,233

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q12 [Optional] Do you or your child belong to an equity deserving group?
 (Have you or your child faced barriers as a special education learner, person of physical or other disability, English Language Learner or member of the Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ or new immigrant communities?)

Answered: 4,590 Skipped: 1,851



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.39%	1,257
No	60.44%	2,774
Prefer not to say	12.18%	559
TOTAL		4,590

Family/Caregiver - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q13 [Optional] Is there anything you would like us to know about your experience with the semester model?

Answered: 1,394 Skipped: 5,047

Q14 [Optional] Is there anything you would like us to know about organizing secondary school schedules?

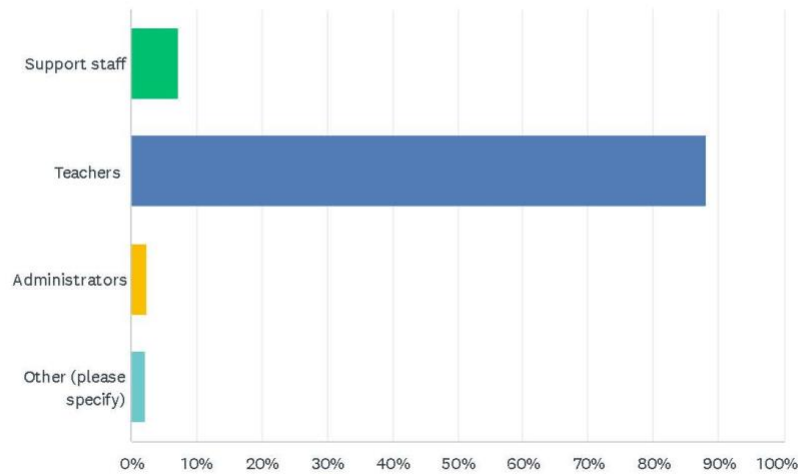
Answered: 1,044 Skipped: 5,397

Appendix C: Staff Survey and Results

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q1 Please indicate your employee group

Answered: 1,037 Skipped: 0

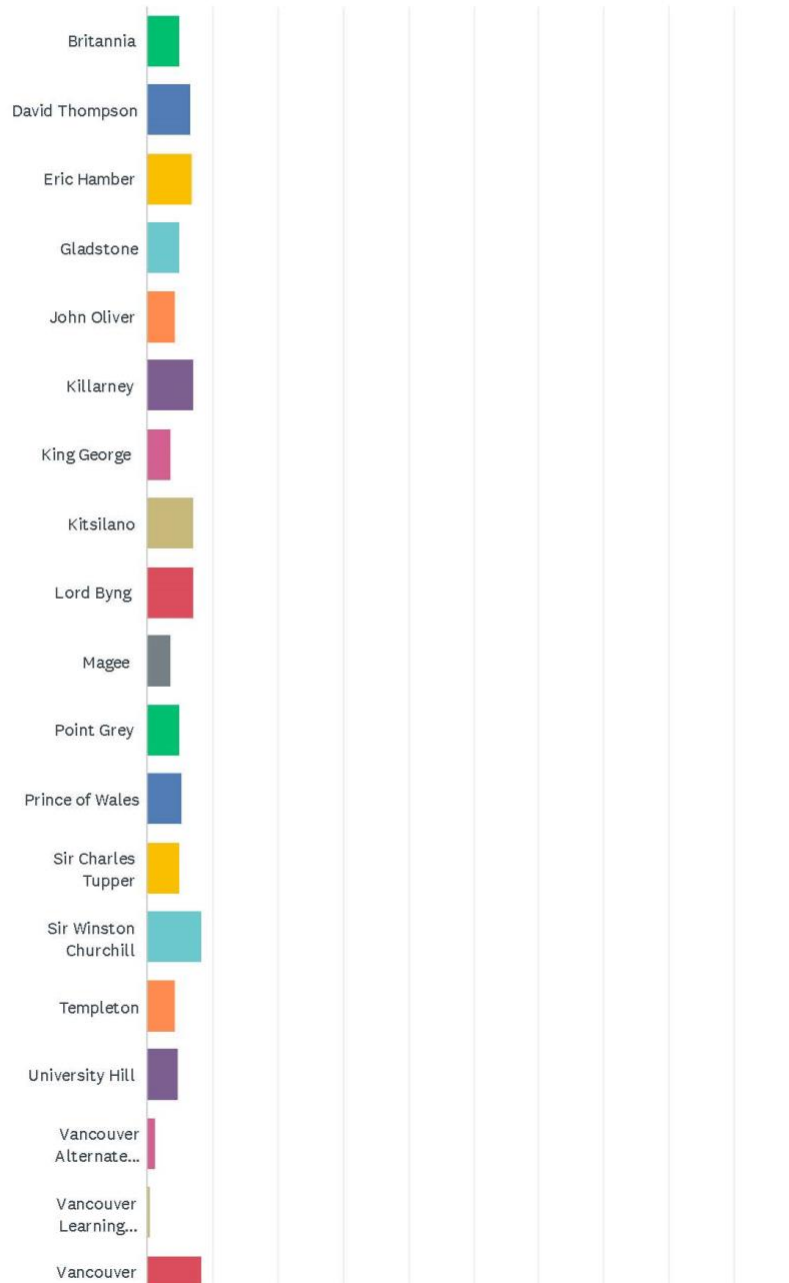


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Support staff	7.33%	76
Teachers	88.14%	914
Administrators	2.31%	24
Other (please specify)	2.22%	23
TOTAL		1,037

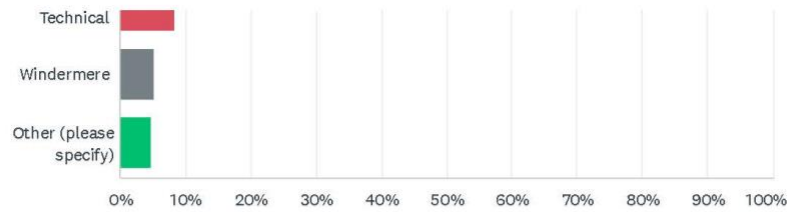
Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q2 What school(s) do you work at?

Answered: 1,037 Skipped: 0



Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

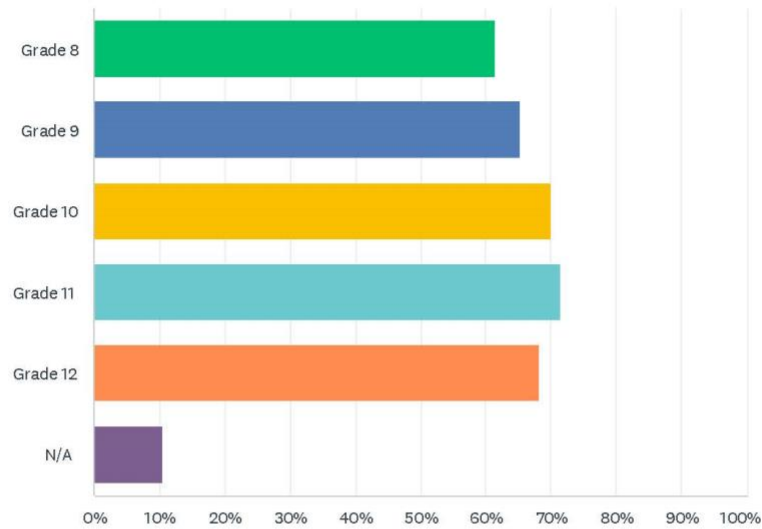


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Britannia	4.82%	50
David Thompson	6.56%	68
Eric Hamber	6.75%	70
Gladstone	4.82%	50
John Oliver	4.34%	45
Killarney	7.14%	74
King George	3.57%	37
Kitsilano	6.94%	72
Lord Byng	7.14%	74
Magee	3.66%	38
Point Grey	4.92%	51
Prince of Wales	5.30%	55
Sir Charles Tupper	4.82%	50
Sir Winston Churchill	8.29%	86
Templeton	4.34%	45
University Hill	4.73%	49
Vancouver Alternate Secondary School	1.35%	14
Vancouver Learning Network	0.48%	5
Vancouver Technical	8.29%	86
Windermere	5.21%	54
Other (please specify)	4.63%	48
Total Respondents: 1,037		

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q3 What grades do you teach? Choose all that apply.

Answered: 1,008 Skipped: 29

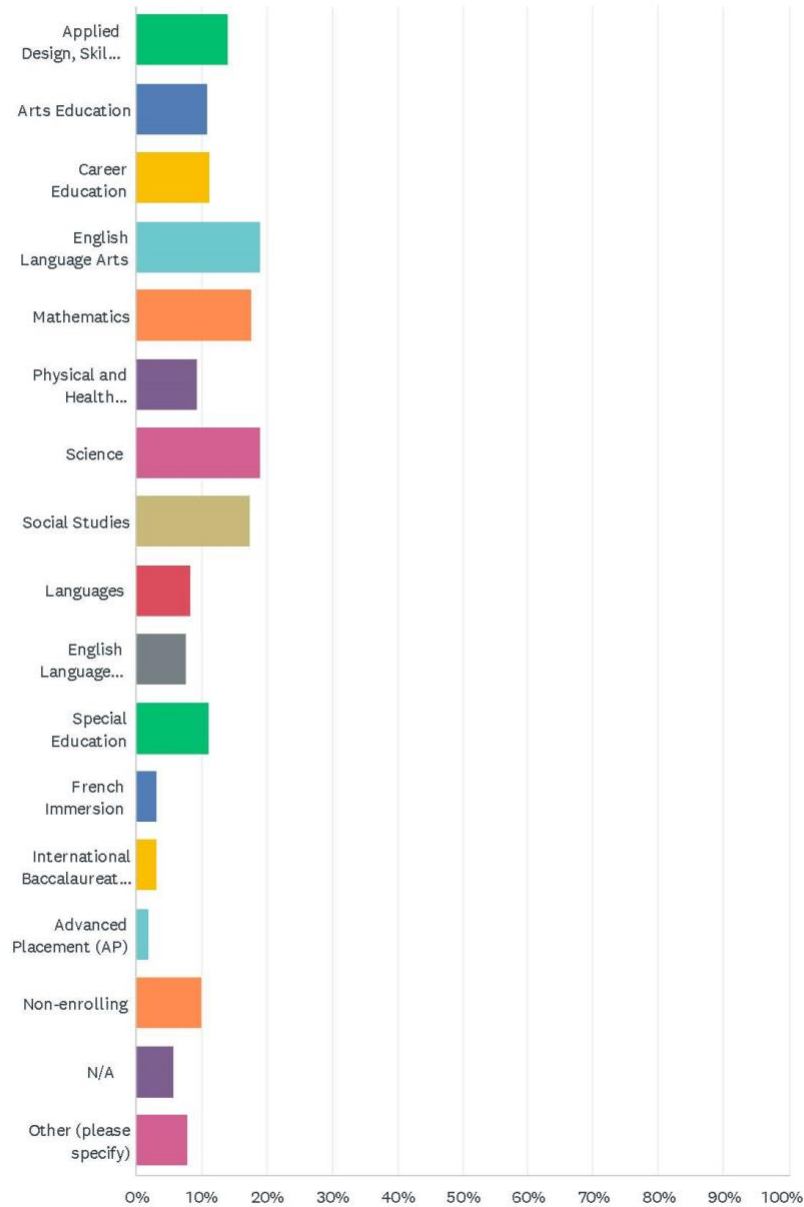


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Grade 8	61.51%	620
Grade 9	65.18%	657
Grade 10	69.84%	704
Grade 11	71.43%	720
Grade 12	68.25%	688
N/A	10.52%	106
Total Respondents: 1,008		

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q4 What subject areas do you teach in? Choose all that apply.

Answered: 1,008 Skipped: 29



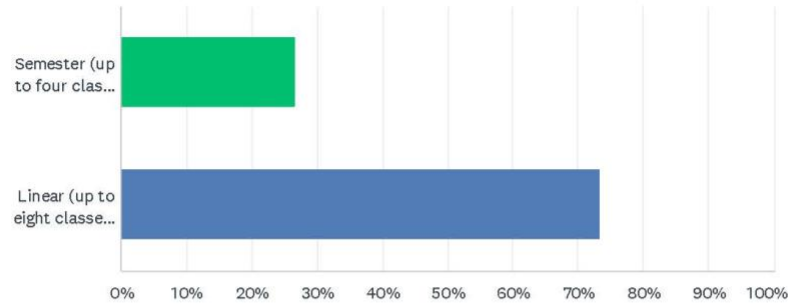
Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Applied Design, Skills and Technologies	14.09%	142
Arts Education	10.81%	109
Career Education	11.21%	113
English Language Arts	19.05%	192
Mathematics	17.66%	178
Physical and Health Education	9.33%	94
Science	18.95%	191
Social Studies	17.46%	176
Languages	8.33%	84
English Language Learners (ELL)	7.64%	77
Special Education	11.01%	111
French Immersion	3.27%	33
International Baccalaureate (IB)	3.17%	32
Advanced Placement (AP)	1.98%	20
Non-enrolling	9.92%	100
N/A	5.75%	58
Other (please specify)	7.94%	80
Total Respondents: 1,008		

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q5 Which class schedule format do you prefer, semester or linear?

Answered: 994 Skipped: 43

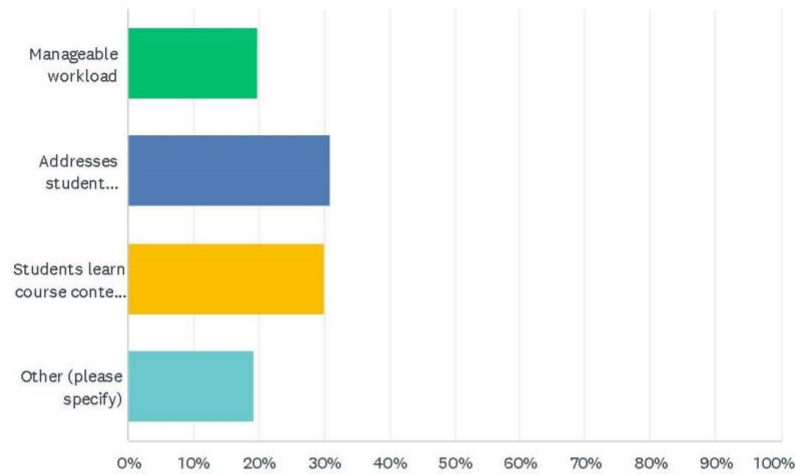


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester (up to four classes that run for one semester twice a year)	26.66%	265
Linear (up to eight classes that run for the full school year)	73.34%	729
TOTAL		994

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q6 If you stated that you prefer a semester model, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 266 Skipped: 771

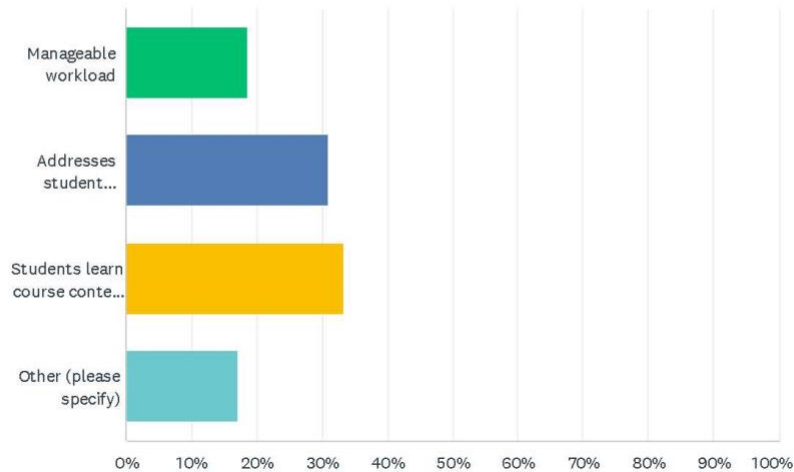


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Manageable workload	19.92%	53
Addresses student learning needs	30.83%	82
Students learn course content better	30.08%	80
Other (please specify)	19.17%	51
TOTAL		266

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q7 If you stated that you prefer a linear model, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 719 Skipped: 318

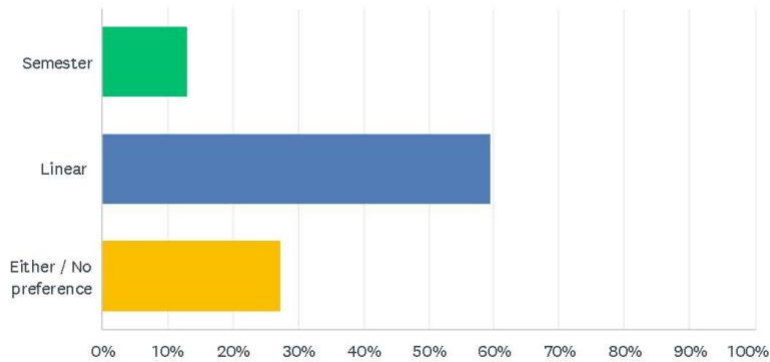


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Manageable workload	18.64%	134
Addresses student learning needs	31.02%	223
Students learn course content better	33.24%	239
Other (please specify)	17.11%	123
TOTAL		719

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q8 Do you think it is easier for students to build relationships with their peers in a semester or linear schedule?

Answered: 972 Skipped: 65

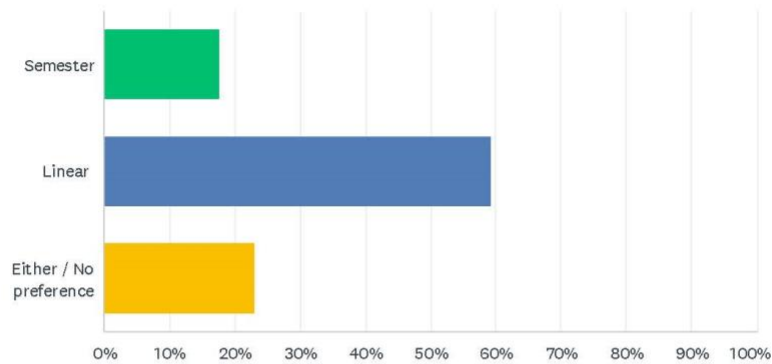


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester	13.07%	127
Linear	59.57%	579
Either / No preference	27.37%	266
TOTAL		972

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q9 Do you think it is easier for students to build relationships with you in a semester or linear schedule?

Answered: 972 Skipped: 65

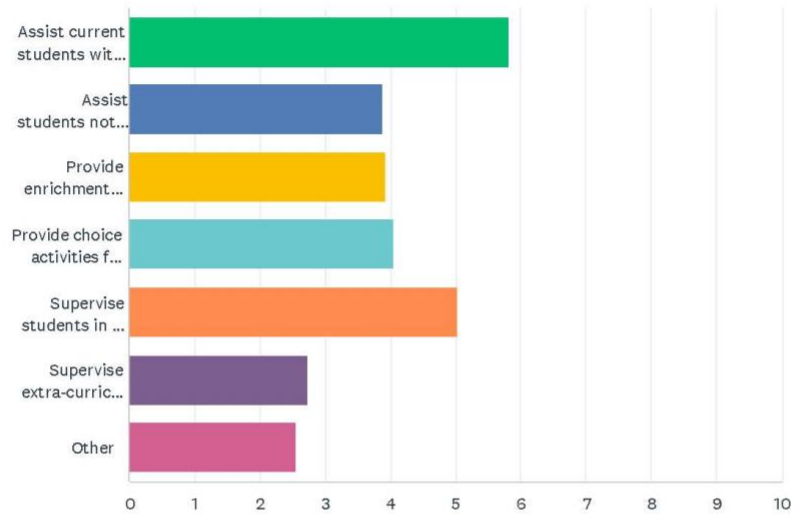


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Semester	17.59%	171
Linear	59.36%	577
Either / No preference	23.05%	224
TOTAL		972

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q10 What are the most common activities you engage with students during FIT? Rank from most frequent to least frequent (1 most frequent, 7 least frequent or not at all)

Answered: 925 Skipped: 112

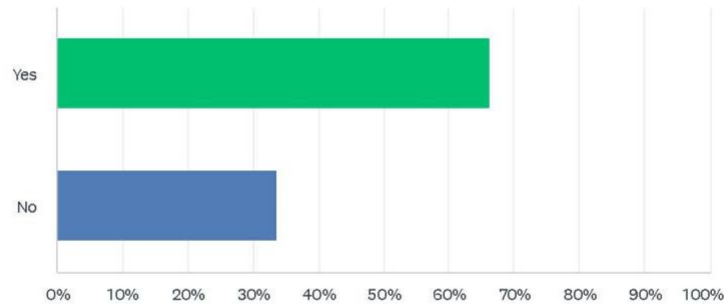


	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
Assist current students with understanding course work	51.68% 478	21.73% 201	8.65% 80	4.43% 41	6.38% 59	3.57% 33	3.57% 33	925	5.83
Assist students not enrolled in current classes with academic work	4.43% 41	17.41% 161	21.08% 195	14.27% 132	15.03% 139	16.54% 153	11.24% 104	925	3.87
Provide enrichment activities for students	3.68% 34	12.22% 113	20.11% 186	25.73% 238	19.03% 176	14.05% 130	5.19% 48	925	3.93
Provide choice activities for students	5.41% 50	11.68% 108	18.70% 173	27.46% 254	23.57% 218	9.62% 89	3.57% 33	925	4.05
Supervise students in a teaching space	25.62% 237	22.49% 208	17.08% 158	11.68% 108	14.49% 134	5.19% 48	3.46% 32	925	5.04
Supervise extra-curricular activities	1.62% 15	6.38% 59	8.76% 81	8.86% 82	15.24% 141	38.49% 356	20.65% 191	925	2.72
Other	7.57% 70	8.11% 75	5.62% 52	7.57% 70	6.27% 58	12.54% 116	52.32% 484	925	2.56

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q11 Do you think FIT supports student success at school?

Answered: 921 Skipped: 116

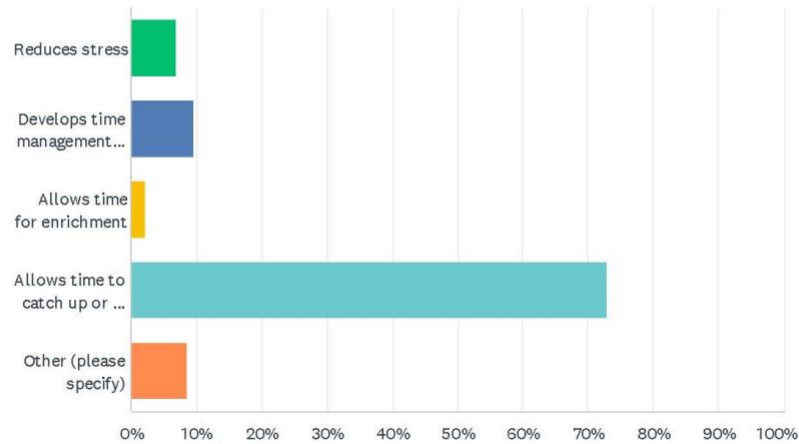


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	66.34%	611
No	33.66%	310
TOTAL		921

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q12 If you answered yes, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 613 Skipped: 424

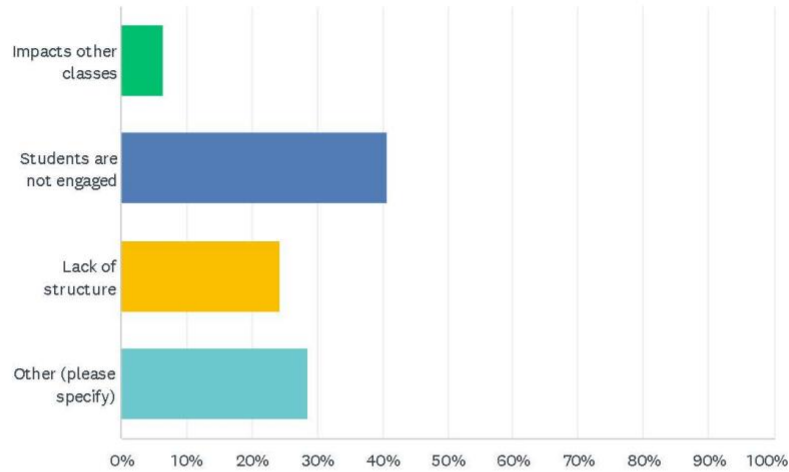


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Reduces stress	6.85%	42
Develops time management skills and personal responsibility	9.62%	59
Allows time for enrichment	2.12%	13
Allows time to catch up or get extra help	72.92%	447
Other (please specify)	8.48%	52
TOTAL		613

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q13 If you answered no, what is the most important reason why?

Answered: 314 Skipped: 723

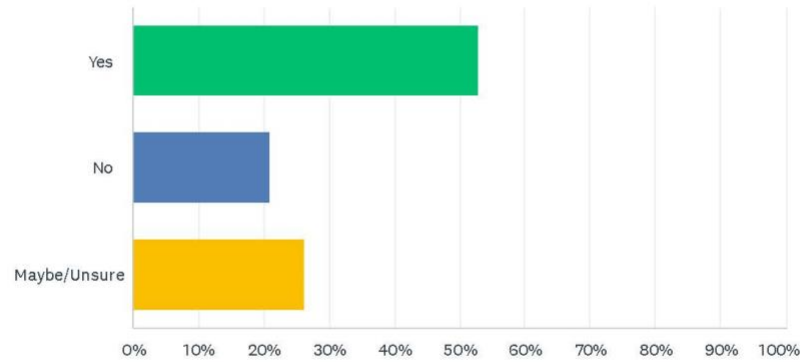


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Impacts other classes	6.37%	20
Students are not engaged	40.76%	128
Lack of structure	24.20%	76
Other (please specify)	28.66%	90
TOTAL		314

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q14 Do you want FIT to continue into future school years?

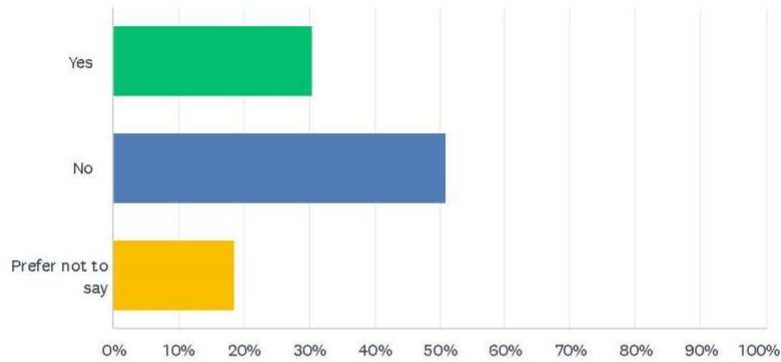
Answered: 921 Skipped: 116



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	52.88%	487
No	20.85%	192
Maybe/Unsure	26.28%	242
TOTAL		921

Q15 [Optional] Do you belong to an equity deserving group? (Have you faced barriers as a person of physical or other disability, new English learner or member of the Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ or new immigrant communities?)

Answered: 802 Skipped: 235



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	30.42%	244
No	51.00%	409
Prefer not to say	18.58%	149
TOTAL		802

Staff - Preferred Secondary Schedule

Q16 [Optional] Is there anything you would like us to know about your experience with the semester model?

Answered: 545 Skipped: 492

Q17 [Optional] Is there anything you would like us to know about organizing secondary school schedules?

Answered: 424 Skipped: 613

Appendix D: Open-Ended Responses

The following are a selection of verbatim responses.

Group	Verbatim Responses
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As part of the strings orchestra, I find semester system harder, since me and many of my friends do not play our instrument outside of school and we lose our skills and forget how to play when not taking lessons all year. The same goes for all other classes, especially PE• I feel that I can focus more on my classes and understand more concepts within the class• It does affect what you remember because it could be a year since you've actually done anything in math, for example. So you forgot anything you've learned in the previous grade.• I think the semester is excellent in terms of workload, but when it comes to retaining information learnt, I think the linear system would be better. In the semester system, it is hard to remember what I learnt from the first semester last year since it's been half a year since I've done anything related to the subject. However, the semester system would mean that I only need to handle four subjects at a time helping the workload and my focus and progress at the moment.• The semester model is amazing! Please keep it! I don't know how I could do 8 classes in a year; I could have so many tests on one day!• It's less stressful as I only have to worry about 4 subjects which I think helps me focus better. But in a way the system goes in a very fast pace.• The Courses go by too fast not allowing me to gain a deeper understanding in subjects.• The course-load that teachers provide is less organised and the subjects would typically take a longer amount of time to learn are

	<p>crammed into shorter periods. There is little breathing room for students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unbalanced courses • It helps me have an in depth focus on a smaller range of classes which helps me a lot with mental health and performance • It makes your day boring; you don't have PE for more than 6 months! And then every day for 5 months. We forget subject material if we don't practice it for over 6 months. • I found the linear system to be incredibly difficult. Having to balance 8 courses meant I wasn't nearly as immersed in them as I am now in semester. My marks were low during linear, because there were way too many classes at once. Now that the semester system has been implemented, my grades are great and I feel like I enjoy school so much more. I will be incredibly upset if we switch back to linear next year, as I want my final year in high school to a good experience where I have the best environment to learn and grow, which for me is semester. The overwhelming majority of students I've spoken to much prefer semester, and they all agree that 8 classes is stressful, and does not support learning nearly as much.
Family/Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the only system our child and family has experienced. I can tell that having math and socials everyday has been productive for his learning. He is more focused and has grasped content in a more meaningful way. At the social level it also supports a sense of belonging and stronger relationships that if he was running around the school to get to other classes • I feel that for courses such as math, a linear model is better because it spreads out the learning concepts over a longer time and there isn't a potentially large gap between grades. (example Math 10 in first semester and Math 11 in second semester a year later) • It is much easier to manage a semester schedule. Students can concentrate on 4 subjects and delve much deeper in to course material.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The one drawback to the semester model is that students who do not engage in extra curricular physical activity only have PE for half of the school year. My child is one of those who is minimally active outside of school and her mental health is far greater when she has PE. • In general I like the intensity and simplicity of the semester system. I worry about subjects like math and French that build from year to year - when there is such a long gap between years. • Not all teachers have adapted their style/content to adapt to the semester program and just cram everything into their course. It has caused great stress to some of the students. • Child said no complaints. They enjoy semester terms. • Students are more likely to experience more stress in semester model. In addition, it is easy to forget class's concepts in semester model. For example, some students did not learn math in a year and already forgot everything they learned. • Students are more likely to experience more stress in semester model. In addition, it is easy to forget class's concepts in semester model. For example, some students did not learn math in a year and already forgot everything they learned. • My son struggles with executive functioning as part of his ADHD diagnosis. The semester model enables my son to focus on fewer courses and to have more time to be on top of his workload during class. He can establish a better relationship with his teachers - who can understand what is required / acceptable according to his accommodations. Even in the semester system, these accommodations don't always get taken into account. Having to manage these expectations with 7 teachers is much harder, it is harder to get time with each teacher, and very hard for him to manage all his course assignments and due dates. • Too long between courses. Could be up to a year. Also linear allows the student to process what their being taught over more time. Semester is too compressed. • i think it's great but could be interesting to consider doing a couple courses year round (say, PE and art/home ec) semester 1 PE is 2x/week and home ec 3x/week and semester 2 is PE 3x/week and home ec 2x/week so that kids have physical activity throughout the full year.
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Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is more thought put into managing and keeping balance of teacher workloads (aka reducing number of teachable subjects) it is definitely an easier system to manage for staff and students • Please consider adding in a daily tutorial block (eg, 30 minutes every morning) instead of FIT twice a week. Please do not extend the school day any longer than it is. • Semesters block opportunities for students and make timetabling much more difficult to get courses students wish to take. This is from the point of view of someone who does timetables with students. • A linear model allows Skills blocks to service students all year, makes for more useful/manageable preps, and provides optimal flexibility in scheduling as there is no semester divisor. • Both schedules work well but there must be a prep throughout the year. • The semester system is much less chaotic, in my experience. Students and teachers can focus more and have more quality continuous time together. But there has to be a daily prep block built into it otherwise it is not sustainable. • Part of the reason I prefer semester is because I have the luxury of being part-time. If I was working full-time, I may not choose semester. Five months with no prep is not sustainable. • Pedagogically linear model supports the development of skills and reduces anxiety in senior grades. • If semester must go through, something needs to be figured out regarding year-round Tutorial/Skills support, as well as consistent staff prep time. Take a look at other districts! There are ways around these issues. • I would like us to return to a linear model with a reorganization of FIT. I would like there to be a more comprehensive model around how we use it effectively and equitably. Teachers that teach in more than one teaching area find it challenging to support students in two different learning environments. Ex. PE and science. • If semester continues, there needs to be ways to offer some courses on a linear model. Especially for students who need support of a Skills class.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we provide teachers with time to prep. there are manifold benefits. Also, when new curriculum comes in, teachers need TIME and RESOURCES to prepare them. We need to have time to work interdepartmentally to develop and share resources and learning outcomes. This is especially true when it is BRAND new and the ministry has not gone into a lot of detail about the outcomes/methods etc. • Some districts run linear in the morning and semester in the afternoon. I think this could be a good idea. • I am grateful that we have highly intelligent, understanding, transparent, and skilled teaching colleagues who annually spend hours performing the administrative task of constructing a timetable that works as best as possible for everyone. It is a complex puzzle that they have learned how to solve.
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